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B1, 1.4(D)PAGE 01 CARACA 03360 01 OF 05 052017Z
ACTION ARA-01

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	DODE-00	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EXIM-01	E-00
	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	LAB-01
	L-01	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
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	SAS-00	/021W					

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R 052006Z NOV 98
 FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2204
 INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
 AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO
 USCINCSO MIAMI FL
 CIA WASHDC
 DIA WASHDC
 USIA WASHDC 1915
 USDOC WASHDC 3227

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 CARACAS 003360

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/28/08
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 TAGS: PREL, PGOV, ECON, EFIN, VE
 SUBJECT: WHATEVER IT TAKES TO WIN: A VENEZUELAN CAMPAIGN NOTEBOOK,
 ISSUE 12 (OCTOBER 12-26)

CLASSIFIED BY THOMAS A. SHANNON, POLITICAL COUNSELOR. REASON:
 1.5(D).

 WELCOME TO OUR CAMPAIGN NOTEBOOK

1. (U) THIS IS THE TWELFTH IN A BIWEEKLY SERIES OF REPORTS ON
 VENEZUELA'S 1998 ELECTIONS. DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS--CAMPAIGN
 NEWS TICKER, VIGNETTES, AND HIGH-FLYERS AND BOTTOM-FEEDERS--WE HOPE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 CLASSIFIED BY DEPT. OF STATE, L. R. LOHMAN, DAS, A/ISS
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: ALAN H FLANIGAN
 CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(D)
 DECLASSIFY AFTER: 4 NOV 2023
 DATE/CASE ID: 06 AUG 2007 200504156

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TO USE THIS NOTEBOOK TO BRING YOU BREAKING NEWS, RUMORS AND INSIDER GOSSIP, AND PROFILES OF THE MANY POLITICAL HANDLERS, CAMPAIGN WORKERS, AND POLITICIANS WHO WILL MAKE THIS ELECTION HAPPEN. THIS NOTEBOOK IS DESIGNED TO COMPLEMENT OUR REGULAR POLITICAL REPORTING ON THE ELECTIONS, PROVIDING YOU A GLIMPSE OF THE "OFF CAMERA" POLITICS WHICH WILL NOT APPEAR ELSEWHERE.

CAMPAIGN NEWS TICKER

-- (U) RAFAEL NUNEZ TENORIO, UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, MARXIST, AND CHAVEZ ADVISOR DROPPED DEAD RECENTLY FROM A MASSIVE HEART ATTACK. NUNEZ TENORIO GAINED FAME EARLIER IN THE YEAR WHEN, DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH THE WEEKLY OPINION MAGAZINE "PRIMICIA," HE CAST ASPERSIONS ON WESTERN-STYLE ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY AND REFERRED TO KIM IL SUNG AS A "SOCIALIST STATESMAN." AFTER THIS INTERVIEW, WHICH

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CAUSED A MINOR FIRESTORM, NUNEZ TENORIO WAS HAULED IN BY CHAVEZ AND TOLD NOT TO SPEAK TO THE PRESS AGAIN. FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES, HE WAS REMOVED FROM THE CAMPAIGN STAFF AND SUPPOSEDLY SIDELINED. NEVERTHELESS, HE MAINTAINED A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH MANY AT CHAVEZ'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS, AND WAS AN IMPORTANT LINK TO RADICAL INTELLECTUALS AT THE VENEZUELAN CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (UCV). NUNEZ TENORIO'S FUNERAL WAS A WHO'S WHO OF THE VENEZUELAN LEFT, BUT SOME OF HIS MOST DISTRAUGHT MOURNERS WERE IN THE ANTI-CHAVEZ CAMP, WHO WERE UPSET AT LOSING SUCH A GOOD FOIL.

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-- (U) A FEW WEEKS AFTER THIS [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] THE RENOVATION PARTY ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS WITHDRAWING ITS CANDIDATE IN ZULIA STATE. IN ZULIA, [REDACTED] PARTY WOULD SUPPORT AD GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE MANUEL ROSALES, WHO FACES OFF AGAINST FORMER CHAVEZ COUP PARTNER FRANCISCO ARIAS CARDENAS IN A TOUGH RACE. RUMORS WERE CIRCULATING LAST WEEK THAT [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] BARINAS STATE, WHERE HUGO CHAVEZ'S FATHER--HUGO DE LOS REYES CHAVEZ--IS RUNNING AS THE MVR GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE. [REDACTED] TOLD THE

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HOWEVER, [REDACTED] TOLD THE NOTEBOOK THAT TALKS WITH AD IN BARINAS HAD BROKEN DOWN, LARGELY BECAUSE AD GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE RAFAEL ROSALES PENA SEEMS ON HIS WAY TO AN EASY VICTORY. [REDACTED] THAT AD DID NOT NEED RENOVATION SUPPORT, AND THE RACE WAS NOT CLOSE ENOUGH TO MAKE WORTHWHILE FOR RENOVATION THE RISK OF ASSOCIATION WITH AD.

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-- (U) [REDACTED] CONCERNS ARE NOT ALWAYS ON MATTERS OF STATE. DURING HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE NOTEBOOK, HE RECEIVED TWO CALLS ON HIS CELLPHONE FROM HIS WIFE. THE FIRST HAD TO DO WITH FURNITURE THEY HAD JUST PURCHASED. THE SECOND HAD TO DO WITH WHICH OF THE TWO WOULD PICK UP THEIR YOUNG DAUGHTER FROM SCHOOL. AFTER THE SECOND PHONE CALL, [REDACTED] APOLOGIZED TO US, SAYING, "SCHOOL JUST STARTED. MY WIFE AND I STILL HAVEN'T WORKED OUT OUR SCHEDULES."

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-- (U) "FRIJOLITO," SALAS ROMER'S WHITE HORSE, IS RUMORED TO BE DEAD. [REDACTED] TOLD THE NOTEBOOK DURING A DINNER RECENTLY THAT FRIJOLITO HAD KEELED OVER FOLLOWING ONE OF SALAS ROMER'S RIDES THROUGH THE CARABOBO STATE COUNTRYSIDE. THE WHITE HORSE, WHICH SALAS USES TO UNDERSCORE HIS AUTHORITY AND MANLINESS, IS IMPORTANT TO THE CAMPAIGN. [REDACTED] SAID SALAS ROMER'S POLITICAL OPERATIVES WERE BUSY LOOKING FOR A FRIJOLITO REPLACEMENT AND TRYING TO KEEP THE DEATH QUIET. THE SALAS CAMPAIGN DENIED THAT FRIJOLITO HAD DROPPED DEAD, AND PROMPTLY SENT VIDEO CLIPS TO NEWS

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INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	AID-00	ACQ-01	CEA-01	CTME-00
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	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	LAB-01
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	T-00	FMP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	FDIC-01
	SAS-00	/021W					

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R 052006Z NOV 98
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2205
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
CIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USIA WASHDC 1916
USDOC WASHDC 3228

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 05 CARACAS 003360

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STATIONS SHOWING SALAS ROMER MOUNTED ON HIS TRUSTY STEAD. SOME
WAGS SUGGESTED THAT THE NEWS CLIPS WERE "EL CID IN REVERSE," WITH
A LIVE MAN ON A DEAD HORSE.

-- (U) IRENE'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS HAD ITS TELEPHONES TURNED OFF
RECENTLY FOR NOT PAYING ITS BILLS. THE NOTEBOOK TRIED TO PLACE
SEVERAL CALLS TO IRENE'S CAMPAIGN MANAGERS LAST WEEK WITH NO LUCK.
EVEN [REDACTED] CELLPHONE WAS NOT FUNCTIONING. WE FINALLY
GOT THROUGH ON THE PERSONAL CELLPHONE OF [REDACTED] THE
PHONES WERE BACK ON THIS WEEK, BUT THE PHONE OUTAGE UNDERSCORED
IRENE'S DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING CAMPAIGN FUNDS AFTER FALLING TO
FOURTH PLACE IN THE POLLS.

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VIGNETTES

500,000 TAXI DRIVERS CAN'T BE WRONG

2. (U) THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL FRONT OF
VENEZUELAN PUBLIC TRANSPORT SENT THE AMBASSADOR A LETTER RECENTLY
CALLING ON THE U.S. TO GRANT HUGO CHAVEZ A VISA. THE LETTER READS:

MR. AMBASSADOR:

THE DRIVERS OF TAXIS, MICROBUSES, AND JEEPS (USED TO TRANSPORT
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PEOPLE IN THE BARRIOS) OF VENEZUELA ARE CONVINCED THAT IN YOUR COUNTRY EXISTS A TRUE AND AUTHENTIC DEMOCRACY, BUT WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY BANDITS AND THIEVES WHO ROB OUR COUNTRY ARE GIVEN VISAS BY YOUR GOVERNMENT, SOMETIMES EVEN DIPLOMATIC VISAS, WHILE OUR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, HUGO CHAVEZ FRIAS, WHO HAS STOOD UP AGAINST THESE THIEVES, CANNOT GET A VISA.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: IN THE NAMES OF THE 500,000 DRIVERS OF MICROBUSES, TAXIS, AND JEEPS OF VENEZUELA, WE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST A VISA FOR COMMANDATE HUGO CHAVEZ FRIAS, THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA BY THE EXPRESSED WILL OF PEOPLE AND WE DRIVERS.

SIGNED:

JUAN PEREZ VARGAS, PRESIDENT
PEDRO BENITEZ, VICE PRESIDENT
ANGEL NAVA, SECRETARY GENERAL
PEDRO MARCANO, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL
CARMEN NIEVEZ, SECRETARY OF FINANCE
SIMNO VARGAS, SECRETARY OF COMPALINTS
MORETRT MARCELO, PROTOCOL SECRETARY
CLEMENTE MOIRA, SECRETARY OF ORGANIZATION
ROSA GARRIDO, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ERARDO HEVIA, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
PONCIO MOGOLLON, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
RICARDO ANDRADE, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
PEDRO JOSE MARQUEZ, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
WILFREDO BIZOT, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ANGLE CAMACHO, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

OVERSEAS VOTERS: ONLY 8 PERCENT REGISTER
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3. (U) OF THE 130,000 VENEZUELANS WHO LEAVE OUTSIDE OF VENEZUELA, ONLY 10,637 REGISTERED TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS. THE GOV'S 118 DIPLOMATIC MISSION AND CONSULAR POSTS WERE OPEN TO REGISTER VOTERS FROM JULY 8 UNTIL AUGUST 9. FOREIGN MINISTRY AND CNE OFFICIALS CLAIM THE EXERCISE A SUCCESS, ASSERTING THAT THEY ONLY EXPECTED 6,000 TO REGISTER. OFFICIALS NOTED THAT ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLES TO REGISTERING WAS THE REQUIREMENT OF A LAMINATED ID CARD, WHICH MANY VENEZUELANS LIVING OVERSEAS HAVE EITHER LOST OR NOT UPDATED. OF THE 10,637, NEARLY HALF (5,175) CAN BE FOUND IN THE UNITED STATES. OF THESE, MORE THAN 3,000 ARE FROM THE MIAMI AREA. THE MAJOR FOREIGN VOTING AREAS WILL BE:

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COUNTRY -----	NO. OF VOTERS REGISTERED -----
U.S.	5,175
NETHERLANDS	738 (403 IN ARUBA)
COLOMBIA	537
SPAIN	431
CANADA	273
CHILE	260
GERMANY	252

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	SAS-00	/021W					

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R 052006Z NOV 98
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2206
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
CIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USIA WASHDC 1917
USDOC WASHDC 3229

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BRAZIL	219
LEBANON	212
U.K.	204
ECUADOR	147
FRANCE	126
ITALY	103
MEXICO	121
ARGENTINA	115
PERU	110
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	109
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	108
PORTUGAL	96
COSTA RICA	93
SWITZERLAND	89
ISRAEL	87
PANAMA	64
CHINA	63

4. (U) THE REMAINING 1,167 VOTERS ARE SCATTERED THROUGH 52 COUNTRIES, RANGING FROM 58 IN GREECE TO 2 IN ALGERIA.

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	T-00	FMP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	FDIC-01
	SAS-00	/021W					

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R 052006Z NOV 98
 FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2207
 INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
 AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
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 USIA WASHDC 1918
 USDOC WASHDC 3230

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	SAS-00	/021W					

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R 052006Z NOV 98
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
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USCINCSO MIAMI FL
CIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USIA WASHDC 1919
USDOC WASHDC 3231

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